

REMARKS

On consideration of the claims of this pending application, Applicant submits the above Preliminary Amendment. Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-22 and 30-32 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 12, and 30 being the independent claims. Claims 20-29 and 33-50 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 51-53 have been added. Support for the subject matter of the amended and new claims is contained in the application as originally filed. Because the foregoing changes introduce no new matter, their entry is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

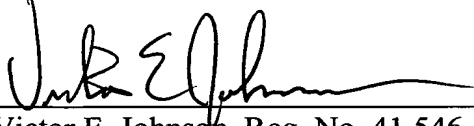
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees associated with this communication, including any necessary fees for extension of time or additional claims, and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2319 (Order No. 467127-new; Docket No. A-70345-1/RBC/VEJ).

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Response is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP

Date: 1/16/2004

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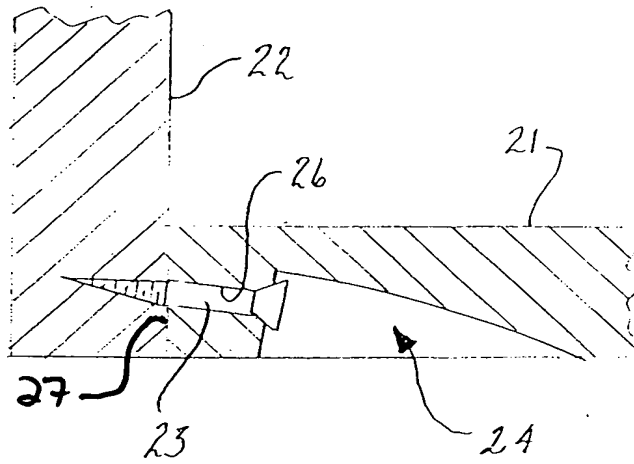


FIG. 1
(PRIOR ART)

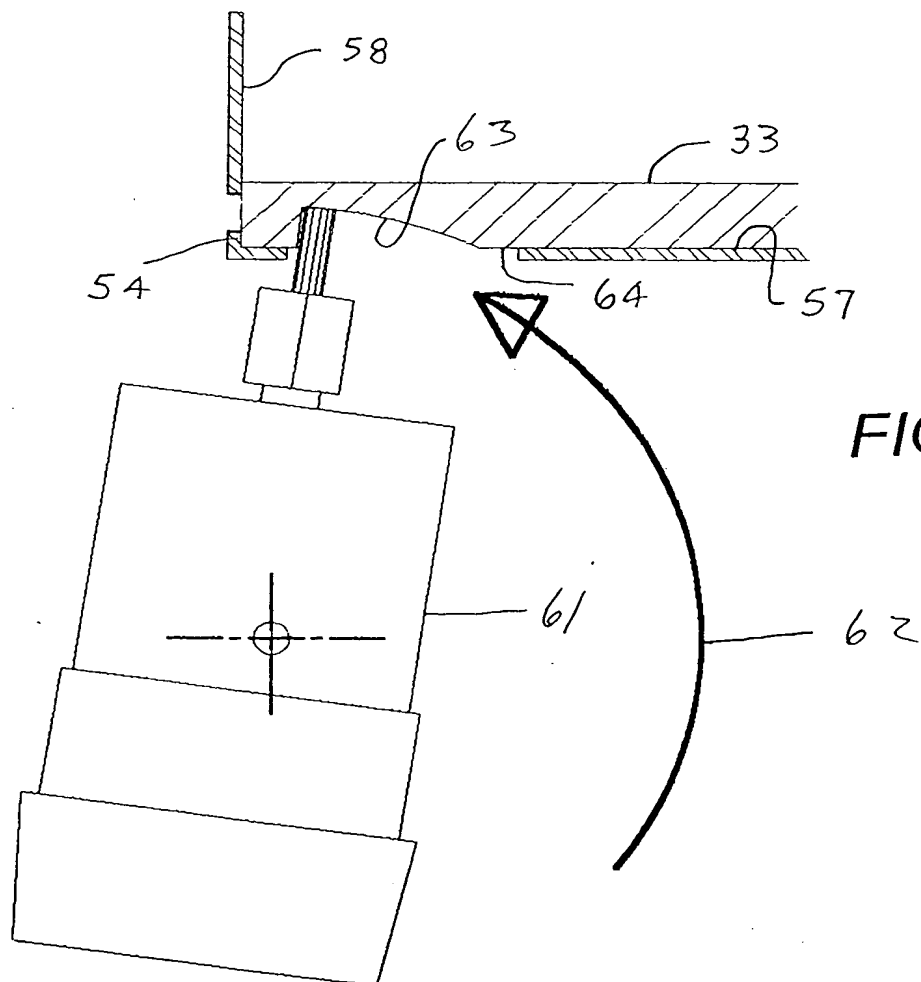


FIG. 4

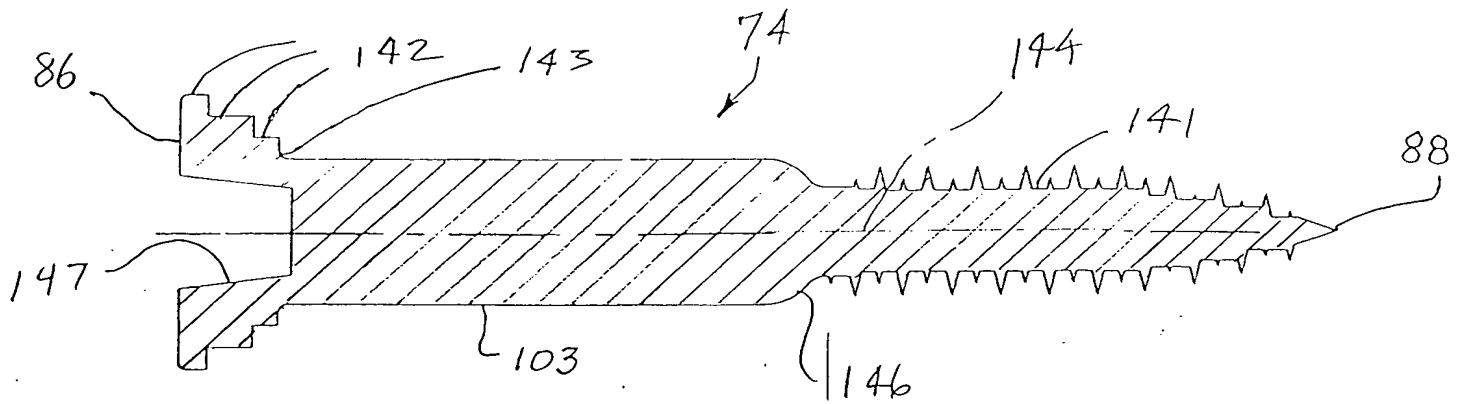


FIG. 13

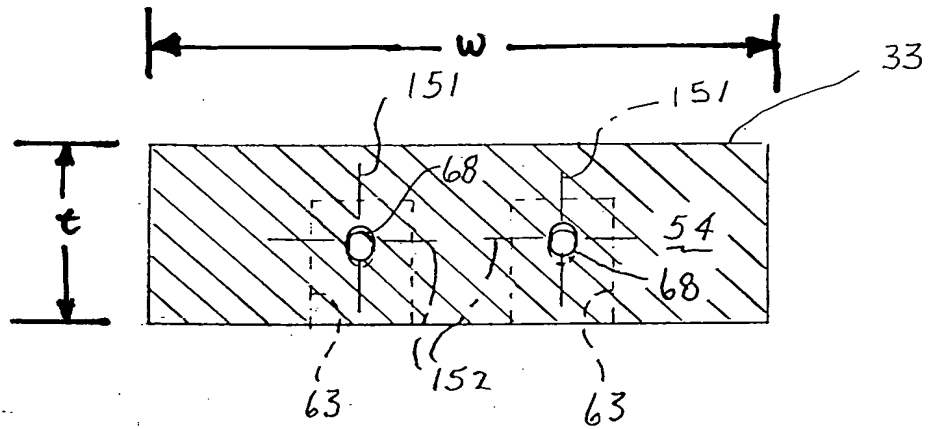


FIG. 14